Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
1 March 1999

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Fourth periodic report of States parties

Addendum

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*
(The Falkland Islands)

* For the initial report submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom, see CEDAW/C/5/Add.52 and Amend.1–4; for its consideration by the Committee, see CEDAW/C/SR.155, CEDAW/C/SR.156 and CEDAW/C/SR.159 and CEDAW/C/SR.160, and *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/45/38), paras. 167-213. For the second periodic report submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom, see CEDAW/C/UK/2 and Amend.1; for its consideration by the Committee, see CEDAW/C/SR.223 and *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/48/38), paras. 523-589. For the third periodic report submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom, see CEDAW/C/UK/3 and Add.1. and Add.2.

99-05702 (E) 210499

Introduction

1. The Third Report in respect of the Falkland Islands was submitted in June 1997. This report supplements that Report.

2. This Report has been prepared in consultation with the authorities of the Falkland Islands.

3. A contemporary report has also been submitted to the Committee established for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In this report, the Committee is referred to certain parts of that Report which also relates to the position of women.

The role and position of women in society in the Falkland Islands

4. In paragraph 5(a) of the Third Report statistics were given in relation to education. Those statistics are now updated by information in relation to 1997 as follows:

(a) General Certificate of Secondary Education examinations -

Boys sitting examinations	10
Girls sitting examinations	16
Total candidates	26
Total passes all grades	199
Grade C and above passes (all candidates)	102
Grade C and above passes (girls)	62

(b) Students sent overseas by Falkland Islands Government for secondary education for 12th and 13th years of education as at September 1997-

Total	20
Girls	7

(c) Teaching staff employed as at 1 February 1998 -

	Teachers	Assistant Teachers & Special Needs Assistants
Falkland Islands Community School:		
Male	5	1
Female	12	1
Stanley Infant/Junior School:		
Male	2	0
Female	10	8
Camp Education Service:		
Male	5	0
Female	6	0

5. In paragraph 5(d) of the Third Report statistics were presented with regard to the employment and training of women by the Falkland Islands Government. The following statistics have been presented by the Human Resources Department of the Falkland Islands Government to update those statistics and are correct as at 7 September 1998:

(a) the total number of persons currently employed by the Falkland Islands Government in administrative/technical/professional posts, including contract officers is 347;

(b) the number of those included in (a) who are women is 189;

(c) the number of persons included in (a) who are employed in higher grade posts
(grade D and above) is 177, and the number of these who are women is 68;

(d) the number of persons employed who do not fall within (a) is 294 (non-clerical);

(e) the number of persons of those given at (d) who are women is 103 (non-clerical);

(f) the number of employees sent overseas for training in the 1996/1997 financial

year (June to July) was 40 and in the 1997/1998 financial year was 20; and

(g) the number of persons in (f) who are women was 8 in 1996/1997 and 10 in 1997/1998.

6. In paragraph 2(b) of the Initial Report (CEDAW/C/5/Add.52/amend.2) it was reported that it was known that the proportion of women in employment was tending to increase. Younger married women now frequently seek to be employed throughout their married lives, taking short breaks in connection with the birth of a child and returning to work soon after each child's birth. Even these short breaks in employment have adverse effects in relation to the willingness of some employers to engage women of child-bearing age in management positions or any other position in which a temporary replacement cannot readily be engaged locally. To some extent the difficulty of finding a temporary replacement is accentuated in the small local labour market in a situation where, for some years, there has been full employment. While instances of discrimination of the kind mentioned are difficult to prove, there is anecdotal evidence that they exist. Discrimination of this kind is at present not unlawful, except in relation to employment by the Falkland Islands Government itself. The Government has in mind, however, the enactment of sex discrimination legislation towards the end of 1998 or in early 1999, along similar lines to that at present in force in the United Kingdom.

7. The early return of women to work after childbirth has led to a number of persons offering baby-minding and child-minding for payment. This is a comparatively new development since, in the past, the babies and older children of women at work would normally be looked after by a female relative. Some of the women offering baby-minding or child-minding services have young children of their own. While there is no legislation, such as that in force in the United Kingdom, in relation to the registration and control of child-minding activities, the Social Welfare section of the Medical Department informally supervises such activities and at present, no need for more formal control has been identified.

8. In recent months, a demand for a more formal, private enterprise, creche has developed and it is hoped that a suitable building will shortly be found so that it can be established. There is already a nursery school operating during mornings of school terms and a children's play group in Stanley. For a number of years, the Falkland Islands Government has admitted children to school, on a voluntary basis, from the beginning of the school year in which they attain their fifth birthday. With effect from the school year beginning in January 1999, attendance at school of all children attaining their fifth birthday during the calendar year will be compulsory.

9. Working hours for women in full-time employment do not coincide with school hours. Working hours in Government offices are (generally) 8am to 12noon and lpm to

4.30pm. At the Stanley Infant and Junior School, the school hours are 9am to 12noon and 1.30pm to 3.35pm (younger children) and 3.50pm (older children). Lunch is not provided at school and children are not permitted to remain at school to consume a packed lunch. It is only because of the short distances between workplace, home and school that the difficulties are not unmanageable for working mothers. Even so, particularly at lunch time, children have to be ferried by car between school and home if they live in the newer housing developments at the east or west ends of Stanley. For this and other reasons, many families have two motor vehicles and most younger women are drivers.

10. The increased employment of women, while it has assisted the economic development of the Falkland Islands, has undoubtedly contributed to a trend towards smaller family sizes and is expected to lead to an increase in the average age of the population. This, if it continues and in the absence of immigration, might lead to a reduced number of persons of working age. Thus on a smaller scale, the Falkland Islands in this respect appear to be paralleling trends in a number of western industrialised societies.

11. Very few persons born in the Falkland Islands and aged 30 or above have attended university or other institutes of tertiary education. This applies as much to men as it does to women and the reason is purely economic. Prior to 1987 (when the Falkland Islands began to receive the benefit of income from the fisheries in the waters surrounding the Falkland Islands) the Falkland Islands Government could only afford to send a very limited number of pupils of over 15 years of age overseas for the later years of secondary education, and education at a tertiary level was dependent on funding through the British Council. Those who attained tertiary qualifications remained overseas because there were few prospects in the Falkland Islands.

12. The consequence at the present day is that the Falkland Islands Government and to some extent employers in the private sector have needed to recruit persons on contract overseas to carry out duties which, otherwise, might have been performed by local people. The high priority which the Falkland Islands Government places on education and training of local people is intended to remedy this situation for the future whilst recognising that having regard to the size of the population it is always likely that some skilled personnel will need to be recruited overseas.

13. The limiting effect of a lack of tertiary education suffered by persons born in the Falkland Islands over about 30 years of age is common to both sexes. The Falkland Islands Government is endeavouring to address it in respect of the whole of the population by having established a training committee composed of representatives from Government and the private sector with a task of identifying and addressing the training needs and aspirations of the whole population, while overseas education at

universities and the like (which is generously funded) continues to be administered by the Department of Education.

14. The Falkland Islands Government will undertake a training needs analysis of every pupil leaving school. The academically gifted and inclined will continue, as at present, to go overseas to complete their secondary education and, it is hoped, then progress to universities and similar institutions for tertiary education. Those less academically gifted or inclined will be encouraged and assisted to undertake vocational training either in the Islands or overseas to meet measured vocational standards and qualifications. This will apply without discrimination as between males and females.

15. The exercise will also be undertaken in respect to all employees in the Falkland Islands Government's employment and the Government will encourage private sector employees to do the same. Again this is irrespective of the sex of the employee or marital status. In some cases the training identified will be provided by "distance learning", at least initially, in others it will be necessary for the trainee to be sent overseas.

16. The new development has in part evolved, but with more focus, from the Falkland Islands Government's previous policy of generous assistance to employees to undertake training overseas.

17. As at 1 October 1998 the Falkland Islands Government was funding the training of one woman as a medical practitioner, two women as veterinary surgeons, two women as graduate nurses, one woman as a radiologist and part-funding the two years compulsory in-service professional training of one woman as an English solicitor (having previously fully funded her university and her compulsory post-graduate professional training). It is fully funding the training of a woman towards qualification as a member of a professional accountancy body. In each of the last three years, the Falkland Islands Government has arranged for a number of one day and two day courses conducted by the Industrial Society to be carried out locally.

18. There are somewhat different circumstances in relation to females in Camp (the countryside of the Falkland Islands outside Stanley) than those appertaining to females living in Stanley. While the relevant information is not contained in the 1996 Census Report, the Falkland Islands Government is aware that there are few unmarried women of working age living in Camp. The employment opportunities, for both men and women, outside the sheep farming industry are necessarily limited. Only a handful of farms employ permanent labour and full-time rather than casual employment in the summer is not generally available to women on these farms. The great majority of farms in the Falkland Islands are owner-occupied and operated, except for the employment of casual labour for a few weeks in the summer. Most of these farms are "husband and wife" farms but a few are owned and operated by a man living on his own

(none so owned and operated by a woman). Notwithstanding that the life on husband and wife farms is a difficult one, both in terms of the economics of the enterprise (wool prices having been internationally depressed for some years) and because it is physically demanding, the Falkland Islands Government is under pressure to provide more such farms for sale. In part this may be because the way of life in Camp is regarded as representing the ethos of the Falkland Islands.

19. The Falkland Islands Government is conscious of the particular difficulties faced by families living in Camp. Partly to increase the opportunities of social contact between families living at remote locations, the Falkland Islands Government has progressively constructed roads to serve remote settlements. In addition it has financed the extension of television broadcasting so that television can be received throughout Camp. The Falkland Islands Development Corporation has promoted a Rural Energy Scheme with the object of achieving the availability of 24 hour electric power to every house in Camp.

20. The Falkland Islands Development Corporation continues to encourage the setting up of cottage industries in Camp with a view to increasing employment opportunities there and to assist in the expansion of such businesses which are valuable to increase business opportunities, particularly for (but not limited to) women.

Legal and other matters to implement the Convention

21. An Equal Employment Rights Bill (based on the Equal Pay Act of the United Kingdom) has recently been drafted and a Sexual Discrimination Bill (again based on the United Kingdom legislation) is in an advanced stage of planning. It is hoped that both of these pieces of legislation, which have obligations under the Convention in mind, will be enacted in coming months.

22. The Falkland Islands Pensions Scheme Ordinance 1997, foreshadowed in paragraph 12 of the Third Periodic Report was enacted: a copy is annexed. There has been no public demand for a change in the provisions of the Taxes Ordinance 1994 (now consolidated in the Taxes Ordinance 1997) which provide for a joint tax return and assessment for married couples. The Falkland Islands Government continues to undertake to introduce a change in the law if there is any local demand for such a change.

Cultural prejudice and family life education

23. There is no doubt that, in the past, Falkland Islands society regarded a woman's role as being subservient to that of men and primarily to revolve around home life. The Falkland Islands Government believes that the initiatives it has taken and reflected in this and previous Reports will do much to assist to remove such role-typing. It regards

as particularly important the education given in Falkland Islands schools and reflected in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the Third Periodic Report.

24. In paragraph 90 of the Initial Report in respect of the Falkland Islands in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Falkland Islands Government's general approach to child protection was dealt with. This is, so far as is consistent with the interests of the particular child, to approach the family as a unit. In some cases the mother will be found to be deficient in parenting skills or household abilities. The Falkland Islands Government's social welfare section endeavours by guidance and advice to assist in such situations.

25. Mothers who are single parents looking after one or more children have special difficulties, particularly where there are young children. It is, for example, regarded as important that the mother should be able to get away from the children from time to time, at least for a few hours. Where necessary, the Falkland Islands Government assists in this, by paying for child-minding services. Reference is made to paragraph 118 of the Initial Report under the Convention on the Rights of the Child which specifies the allowance paid to single parents.

Sexual exploitation of women

26. There is no known prostitution or other form of exploitation for sexual purposes of women in the Falkland Islands.

Political and public life

27. Women in the Falkland Islands continue to play an important part in the political and public life of the Falkland Islands. A general election was held in October 1997 at which three of eight persons selected to membership of the Legislative Council were women. In June 1998, the two representatives of the Falkland Islands at the Committee of 24 of the United Nations were female members of the Legislative Council. Female members of the Legislative Council regularly attend Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meetings overseas. A number of Government committees are chaired by female members of the Legislative Council. They regularly attend Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meetings overseas.

28. There are a number of local organisations which are specifically intended for women but, in addition to these, women are prominent in a number of other local organisations, including the Falkland Islands Museum and National Trust, Falklands Conservation and the local branch of the Falkland Islands Association. The secretary of the Farmers Association is a woman.

October 1998